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ABSTRACT

This report describes and summarizes findings on four National Teachers Examination tests provided by 45 faculty reviewers from six Oregon institutions of higher education. The tests were judged on the basis of students' opportunity to learn knowledge measured in test items and the importance of knowledge of items for beginning teachers. Tests reviewed were: (1) communications skills; (2) general knowledge; (3) professional knowledge; and (4) elementary education. Reviewers' ratings and comments on test items are appended. (JD)

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ED283807

REVIEW OF NATIONAL TEACHERS EXAMINATION

by the

OREGON STATE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Communications Skills Test
General Knowledge Test
Professional Knowledge Test
Elementary Education Test

Report Prepared by Office of Academic Affairs
Oregon State System of Higher Education
P.O. Box 3175
Eugene, Oregon 97403

July 1, 1985

SP 029 007

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Background

Considerable pressure has been placed upon colleges and universities to test the competency of their newly prepared teachers in subject matter and professional methodology, prior to certification. Numerous states require that newly prepared teachers pass tests in subject matter and/or professional methodology as a condition of certification. Some states require that prospective teachers pass performance tests as well, or complete a successful first year of teaching as a condition of certification.

Several developments are underway in Oregon related to the teacher competency issue. During this past legislative session, the Educational Coordinating Commission introduced a bill that would require subject matter testing for prospective teachers. Although the bill was not approved, there is growing pressure on the Teachers Standards and Practices Commission, professional teachers associations, and higher education to determine what should be done in Oregon on the issue of competency testing.

New standards issued by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) include a requirement that colleges and universities use standardized measures of adequacy of preparation of newly prepared graduates. Since the Board of Higher Education requires that State System teacher education programs be accredited by NCATE, the System will have to determine how the new NCATE standards will be met in the very near future.

In the report of the Deans of the Schools of Education to the Board of Higher Education in November, 1984, the State System indicated it would pilot the use of various competency tests in teacher education to look at the advisability of using these tests within the system. Before moving in this direction, however, it seemed advisable to look at the tests available nationwide.

It was determined, therefore, that OSSHE initiate a review of the major tests being used in teacher education nationwide for the benefit of its institutions. A two-step process was selected: four tests would be reviewed in May, 1985, and 25 other subject area tests in the fall. The following report summarizes the results of the first review session.

The Procedures

In late April, Presidents of OSSHE institutions with teacher education programs were notified by the Chancellor of the need to review tests of teacher competency, of the proposed two-step process for the review of the National Teachers Examination, and of the sites selected for the reviews.

Simultaneously, Deans of the Schools of Education were asked to identify faculty with expertise in the areas covered by the four tests scheduled for the first reviews:

- Communications Test (Listening, Reading, Writing)
- General Knowledge Test (Science, Math, Social Science, and Literature and Fine Arts)
- Professional Knowledge
- Elementary Education.

Tests available for review were obtained from the Educational Testing Service, and copies provided to three sites in Oregon selected for the reviews:

- Western Oregon State College
- Southern Oregon State College
- Eastern Oregon State College.

Tests were reviewed by faculty at the three sites: on May 24 at WOSC, and during the following week at SOSC and EOSC. Faculty from PSU, UO, WOSC, and OSU participated in interinstitutional reviews at the WOSC site.

Forty-five faculty participated in the review of the National Teachers Examination tests. Every test was reviewed by a minimum of three faculty members; most tests were reviewed by five, some by as many as ten. Appendix B contains a list of faculty participants, by institution.

Faculty were asked to rate each item on the test by indicating a "yes" or "no" answer to two questions:

1. Would students going through a teacher preparation program at your institution have an opportunity to learn this?*
2. Do you believe it is important for a beginning teacher to have knowledge of this item?**

Faculty were also asked to respond to a number of other questions. These are reflected in the "comment" list included as Appendix C.

Findings

Professional Knowledge. The Test of Professional Knowledge is composed of four separately timed 30-minute sections, each of which contains 35 questions. In the test version made available to us from Educational Testing Service, only three sections were included, with 35 items per section.

The content of the test is broadly based on the process of teaching as it relates to the context of teaching. Two major areas for questioning are typically included: the process of teaching (for example, lesson planning) and the context of teaching (for example, the history, laws, social and cultural conditions related to teaching).

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*Henceforth, called "opportunity"

**Henceforth, called "importance"

Although the test is not conceptually designed with different content in each section, results from the Oregon review suggested that there were some differences in content between sections. The following ratings are provided by section, therefore, because of these differences.

The mean scores for "opportunity" and "importance" were as follows:

Section	No. of Reviewers	Mean Scores "Opportunity" Yes	Mean Scores "Opportunity" No	Mean Scores "Importance" Yes	Mean Scores "Importance" No
1	10	29.3	5.8	26.9	8.3
2	9	26.4	8.6	27.4	8.4
3	8	25.3	9.8	24.1	10.9

* 84% of the questions in Section 1 received a "yes" rating for opportunity, 76% received a "yes" for importance.
* 75% of the questions in Section 2 received a "yes" rating for opportunity, 78% received a "yes" for importance.
* 72% of the questions in Section 3 received a "yes" rating for opportunity, 69% received a "yes" for importance.

Elementary Education. The Education in the Elementary School Subject Area Test is a 105-item test with two major emphases: the child as the focus of teaching, and the process of teaching in the elementary/middle school. About one-third of the test questions refer to language arts and reading; somewhat less than half refer to math, science, and social studies; and the remaining questions are relatively equally divided among art, music, and physical education. About one-third of the questions are general in nature and unrelated to specific grade level; another one-third are related to primary grades; and the remaining third to the upper elementary/middle school grades.

The mean scores for opportunity and importance were as follows:

No. of Reviewers	Mean Scores "Opportunity" Yes	No	Mean Scores "Importance" Yes	No
5	135	15	132	18

* 90% of the questions received a "yes" rating for opportunity, 88% received a "yes" rating for importance.

General Knowledge. The Test of General Knowledge consists of four separately timed sections with 25 to 35 questions in each section. The test is designed to test very general knowledge and understanding of various disciplines and their interrelationships. Four sections are included: Science, Math, Social Studies, and Literature and Fine Arts.

The Math Section is designed to include the kinds of math that any teacher may need whether or not assigned to teach math. A general knowledge of math and reasoning ability rather than the ability to carry out a specific computation or recall a specific formula characterize the kind of questions included. The emphasis is on applied math (for example, using charts, graphs, diagrams, averaging grades, interpreting test results).

The Science Section tests major principles, theories, concepts, and facts of science, and the methods of science. Questions cover nine major themes: energy relationships, living things, structure of organisms, relationships between living organisms and the environment, earth and the universe, matter, forces that act on matter, methods of science, and values/ethics.

The Social Studies Section tests knowledge and ability to interpret and analyze data and information, as well as to synthesize and integrate information. Questions cover four major themes: forces that have influenced

the evolution and current state of human culture and institutions; behavior of individuals, groups, and social institutions; universal features of world culture and history, and essential tools needed to analyze and make informed judgements about society.

The Literature and Fine Arts Section tests recognition of basic elements and components of works of literature and fine art (for example, vocabulary in context, widely used symbols, compositional elements, structural components and materials), analysis and interpretation of works of literature and fine art, and relating works of literature and fine arts to one another and to their social or historical context.

Section	No. of Reviewers	Mean Scores "Opportunity" Yes	Mean Scores "Opportunity" No	Mean Scores "Importance" Yes	Mean Scores "Importance" No
Science	3	21	9	21.7	8.3
Math	6	20	5	27	3
Social Studies	5	27.4	2.6	27.2	2.8
Lit. and Fine Art	6	28.5	6.5	32.7	2.3

* In Science, 70% of the questions received a "yes" rating for opportunity, 72% received a "yes" rating for importance.
* In Math, 80% of the questions received a "yes" rating for opportunity, 88% received a "yes" rating for importance.
* In Social Studies, 91% of the questions received a "yes" rating for opportunity, 91% received a "yes" rating for importance.
* In Literature and Fine Art, 81% received a "yes" rating for opportunity, 93% received a "yes" rating for importance.

Communications. The Test of Communications Skills contains four separately timed sections on Listening, Reading, Writing (multiple choice) and Writing (essay).

The Listening section differs in format from other sections in that the questions are tape-recorded; they do not appear in the test book. Only the directions and answer choices are printed in the test book. The Listening section is divided into three parts, each of which has its own directions. One part requires answers to short questions and statements; a second part requires answers about a conversations between two speakers; a third part requires answers to several short talks.

The Reading section contains long passages, shorter passages, and short statements of one or more sentences. The reading material is drawn from a variety of subject areas. Questions ask about the main idea of the passage, supporting ideas, other specific details, organization, language, logic, and tone; and about the author's purpose, assumptions, attitude toward subject, strengths/weaknesses of argument, inferences that can be drawn, emotional aspects of passage, relevance of supporting evidence, and relationship to intended audience.

The Writing/multiple choice section includes questions about using standard written English correctly and effectively. Examinees are asked to detect errors or choose the best way to rewrite certain phrases or sentences.

The Writing/essay section includes 30 minutes for examinees to write on an assigned topic. The topic generally asks examinees to draw from personal experience and observation for information, examples, and generalizations.

Because of the somewhat different nature of the Listening, Reading, and Writing sections, a tally by item was not completed for this report. Faculty comments on these sections are included in Appendix C.

APPENDIX A
INDIVIDUAL REVIEWERS RATINGS

Professional Knowledge Test
(35 questions in each of 3 sections)

	Opportunity to Learn?		Important to Have Knowledge?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Section 1	28	7	26	9
N=10	14	21	14	21
	35	0	35	0
	30	5	34	1
	34	1	26	9
	31	4	31	4
	27	8	23	12
	29	6	24	11
	34	1	35	0
	30	5	19	16
Mean =	29.2	5.8	26.7	8.3
Section 2	14	21	15	22
N=9	19	16	26	9
	25	10	26	9
	23	12	33	8
	32	3	27	8
	32	3	28	7
	27	8	28	7
	35	0	35	0
	31	4	29	6
Mean =	26.4	8.6	27.4	8.4
Section 3	30	5	24	11
N=8	27	8	33	2
	32	3	24	11
	10	25	10	25
	30	5	23	12
	22	13	27	8
	26	9	29	6
	25	10	23	12
Mean =	25.3	9.8	24.1	10.9

Elementary Test
(150 questions)

N=5	146	4	145	5
	141	9	139	11
	148	2	135	15
	113	37	118	32
	127	23	123	27
	Mean = 135	15	132	18

General Knowledge

Science	21	9	29	1
(30 questions)	30	0	26	4
N=3	12	18	10	20
	Mean = 21	9	21.7	8.3
Math	16	9	21	4
(25 questions)	18	7	18	7
N=6	24	1	24	1
	18	7	25	0
	22	3	22	3
	22	3	22	3
	Mean = 20	5	22	3
Social Studies	29	1	29	1
(30 questions)	28	2	28	2
N=5	25	5	29	1
	30	0	29	1
	25	5	21	9
	Mean = 27.4	2.6	27.2	2.8
Literature and	35	0	35	0
Fine Arts	26	9	35	0
(35 questions)	23	12	35	0
N=6	24	11	35	0
	29	6	27	8
	34	1	29	6
	Mean = 28.5	6.5	32.7	2.3

APPENDIX B
FACULTY REVIEWERS

Institution	Name	Title
UO	Betsy Clewett	Assistant Professor, Teacher Education
	Judith Dunn	Research Assistant, Teaching Research
	Nancy Golden	Liaison Supervisor, Teaching Research
	Jane Morris	Graduate Teaching Fellow, Education
	Samuel Perez	Assistant Professor, Teacher Education
	Oscar Schaaf	Professor, Teacher Education
OSU	Kenneth Ahrendt	Associate Professor, Educational Reading
	Dennis Evans	Assistant Professor, English
	Henry Sayre	Assistant Professor, Art
	Howard Wilson	Professor, Math and Science and Math Education
	Hu Wubben	Professor, History
PSU	Michael Carl	Department Head, Curriculum and Administration
	David Cox	Assistant Professor, Education
	Rick Hardt	Professor, Education
	Carrol Tama	Assistant Professor, Education
	Maxine Thomas	Associate Professor, Education
WOSC	Jean Ferguson	Professor, Elementary Education
	H. Dale Harp	Associate Professor, Elementary Education
	Ronald Morgali	Associate Professor, Natural Science/Math
	Albert Redsun	Associate Professor, Secondary Education
	Ray Sewell	Assistant Professor, Humanities
	Dennis Williams	Assistant Professor, Natural Science/Math
SOSC	John Engelhardt	Assistant Professor, Math/Computer Science
	Richard Frey	Associate Professor, English
	Randy Hitz	Associate Professor, Education
	David Hoffman	Associate Professor, Education
	Wayne Hood	Associate Professor, Science

	Richard Kaough	Director, School of Humanities
	Frank MacGraw	Professor, Geography
	Thomas Nash	Associate Professor, English
	Herman Schmeling	Professor, English
	Karen Shafer	Assistant Professor, Communication
	Petey Young	Assistant Professor, Education
EOSC	Molly Brog	Assistant Professor, Health Education
	Ted Brown	Assistant Professor, Education
	Melissa Thomas Davis	Instructor, Education
	Marilyn Ewing	Assistant Professor, English
	Richard Goad	Assistant Professor, Secondary Science and Education
	James Kearns	Professor, Education
	Jacqueline Kyle	Assistant Professor, Education
	Dwight Lippe	Professor, Mathematics
	Bernice Schmidt	Associate Professor, Eduation
	Kenneth Smith	Associate Professor, Education
	William Spear	Professor, Political Science
	Robert Ward	Associate Professor, Education

APPENDIX C
COMMENTS ON TESTS

Elementary Education

1. Does the test reflect the curriculum of students who would be taking it?

   - Test generally reflects curriculum of students except for Health Education, which is a highly visible part of the elementary school curriculum in some Oregon schools.

   - Many questions represent only one point of view. If this is not the point of view held by a particular institution, students might not get the necessary information in a current curriculum.

   - Questions often require knowledge gained above elementary training, e.g., knowledge of gifted, measurement, and learning disabled certification programs. I agree elementary teachers need to know the information but I question if it is included in all elementary teacher training programs across the country.

   - The test reflects the curriculum of students who would be taking it. Unavoidably biased in places, but overall it's not too bad.

2. Are there specific questions which are technically inadequate, e.g., questions which contain inaccuracies or ambiguities, questions whose response options do not clearly contain one best answer, etc.?

   - Some questions are technically inaccurate/contain inaccuracies or ambiguities. There may be a best answer but it's not fair to the students/future teachers if the professor they have emphasizes a different point of view.

   - Some questions are technically inadequate and inaccurate. For example, 12 assumes all children's motor skills develop at the same rate; 19 has two possible right answers; in 21, the word "exceptional" could mean gifted as well as learning disabled, thus confusing the reader; 31, answers C and D would both be included in good assessment; 35 ITA a poor choice . . . why not LEA or Basal instead (ITA not used that much here in schools).

   - 7 questions are particularly noted as technically inadequate (131, not any good answer; 142, all answers appropriate; 83, not clear which is best; 91, dependent on circumstances; 94, confusing answers; 54, depends on circumstances and situation; 79, all answers could help, who is to say which is best?).

   - 20 questions seem to test general knowledge more than specific knowledge of elementary education.

3. Does there appear to be an adequate balance among the questions treating the subject matter content, the skills necessary in helping pupils to comprehend and learn effectively the content, and the unique professional knowledge of this field?

- Seems like a heavy emphasis on science.
- Questions 1-40 appear well balanced in subject matter. My concern is they require the student to go beyond simple subject matter covered in training programs. A great deal of experiential background, synthesis, and inferences are required.
- I believe the following questions test general knowledge more than the specific knowledge of education: 5, 28, 32, 33, 36, 37, 39, 40, 48, 52, 65, 68, 73, 103, 126, 127, 135, 138, 140.

4. Does the difficulty level appear appropriate for your students?

- The total information required for accurate responses is a bit overwhelming. Skills in test-taking are strongly rewarded. "Good" students can be successful but may not transfer to practice.
- Some of the questions are pretty obvious.
- The test is too difficult. I don't feel that alot of this material is covered in our program.
- Difficulty level is appropriate.
- Difficulty level appears appropriate for the most part. But if that means students should answer 90-100% correctly, than I believe the test is too difficult. Difficulty depends on standard set for passing.
- Readability level in the test is fine. Jargon is kept to necessary level. Distractors require reader to fully understand, even infer, intent of question (i.e., student must be knowledgeable in the areas of cognitive research, developmental psychology, teaching strategies, and available materials).

5. Minority or sex bias noted?

- WASP bias.
- Noted one example of minority or sex bias.
- None noted (N=3).

6. Would you like to use this test with OSSHE students prior to recommendation for certification?

- I would be willing to try it out. It could be used as one criterion. Performance in lab would be another. I don't have sufficient information to judge cut-off scores, what's right in some instances, without seeing answers. I found myself in a trap. Students do have an opportunity to learn most of the information. It is important information but I could not discriminate between important and essential in all cases.

- Test seems like a "hoop" to jump rather than an indicator of successful teaching. Not sure that 150 questions are necessary to do what the test wants to do.

- Would not recommend using the test. The information could be useful in identifying some appropriate knowledge needed by the elementary teacher but the knowledge is not as important as the evidence through application.

- The test is more endurance than assessment of knowledge. Half the number of questions might be appropriate/best. Overall, the test is not bad -- tests general expectations of a well educated elementary candidate.

- I think it would provide a reasonable assessment of a person's professional preparation for teaching. I would see passing this as a minimum standard for certification, not as a substitute for a quality teacher education program which includes extended field experience.

Professional Knowledge

1. Does the test reflect the curriculum of students who would be taking it?

- Somewhat. Heavy emphasis on legal aspects; overemphasis at the expense of learning and how it takes place. Same with 94-142 and cultural diversity. They are important areas but are they top priority? What about foundations?

- Yes (N=3).

- Generally. Many items are vague or dependent upon which teacher(s) a student might have.

- Very difficult to determine.

- In a general way, yes. But there can be an unevenness of content as students transfer from one school to another and as students take different tracks through individual programs at each school. Another problem is that elementary and secondary teachers may not have the same backgrounds demanded by these items. Our secondary education majors are not required to take Ed462 Exceptional Children at this time. Therefore, they would not have had as much background for the 94142,

Special Education focus type questions as the elementary education majors.

- To some degree, yes. There is a large degree of information on the legal and contractual elements of teaching which we do not have time to cover. Tests assume that we cover alot of territory and leave little to be learned on the job.

- It is hard to determine which questions would require retention of specific learnings and which are answered by an application of common sense.

- At our institution we are probably weakest in specific applications of statute to teacher performance.

- The test overemphasizes certain categories of items, underemphasizing implementation and student rights categories. Also tests differ in level of knowledge assessed and type of mental process/reasoning tapped. Regarding our program's curriculum, our students would probably do ok, but not necessarily because of what we teach them.

2. Are there specific questions which are technically inadequate, e.g., questions which contain inaccuracies or ambiguities, questions whose response options do not clearly contain one best answer, etc.?

- Yes, some.

- 4 questions noted as poor items, one of which contains dated information.

- 20 questions noted as poorly worded and ambiguous.

- No.

- Problem with 23.

- The questions are not specific. Words and phrases such as "research, indicates, generalization, likely," etc. in the statements permit selection of a number of responses, anyone of which may be correct.

- 22 -- legal issue is issue of debate. B and C case could be made for either. 26 — depends on child. 27. 28 -- you could say "mostly often" and pull a good guess but case can be made for A, B, or C.

3. Does the difficulty level appear to be appropriate for your students?

- Seems appropriate for graduating seniors.

- Some of my students may have problems with the level of language, although they may have an intuitive understanding of the issues raised.

- Yes. But there would be considerable difficulty if a freshman,

sophomore, or junior would take the test without having completed all the required sequences and student teaching. Even seniors would not complete all of these until their last term.

- Students have all kinds of experience with tests of this nature.

- Some items would "kill" the students while others seem too easy. Many are on target.

- Real variation in levels of difficulty from item to item. Prompts me to inquire about selection of items and also psychometric analyses of items, subtests, and total test. In most cases, the item content is not beyond the level of our students but the vocabulary may be overly sophisticated and weighted with jargon.

- Problem is a beginning teacher (expectations) as opposed to a "master" teacher. Should beginning teachers be master teachers? Many items could be deleted if we had a more realistic set of expectations for a beginning teacher.

- Seems appropriate as an exit test.

- Ok. Of the 3 sections, section III seems more complex and appropriate. Other sections may be too easy.

4. Minority or sex bias noted?

- None noted (N=7).

- Some questions, particularly those in the areas of knowledge requiring professional judgement are value laden; to that extent, these items may discriminate against teachers not conforming to/acculturated to society's dominant values.

5. Would you like to use this test with OSSHE students prior to recommendation for certification?

- Could be used. Might have to have separate tests for elementary and secondary. This professional test might be more elementary-oriented than it is secondary.

- No. I question its reliability and validity in terms of being reflective of good teaching or potential for good teaching.

- I'm not sure that there is an advantage in using the test. It might screen out the very weak though.

- I would prefer that Oregonians work together to identify new and innovative ways to measure teachers' knowledge of content and pedagogy; particularly I would encourage that any paper/pencil test also be accompanied by an assessment experience or field-based.

- It would be nice to show students what is being done in other states. It would be a good home work assignment but I am opposed to additional teacher testing.

- A good check of general professional knowledge and logical thinking. No problems with this if we need yet another test.

- No. I would prefer a combination of both essay and "objective" tests.

- No. I feel that a more mastery based , institutionally tailored evaluation procedure would be more appropriate.

- Not really. I'm not at all sure this test has predictability value in terms of actual skill in front of a class. I believe that two of the four people who I dismissed from student teaching would have passed this test.

- I would like to see empirical data related to performance on the NTE and measured performance of public school students whose teachers have scored well, or poorly, on the examination. What real correlations emerge? Truly, the psychometric issues are critical were we to undertake state-developed test and performance evaluations. But assessment based on program objectives and specific curricular aims is superior to this sort of standardized test. Let's look at subject matter tests next, then make a final stab at test evaluation. Give us some psychometric data, like factor analysis of test.

General Knowledge

1. Does the test reflect the curriculum of students who would be taking it?

Science

- It would reflect the curriculum of only those who had specific science courses. Example: a student with the minimum 12-15 credits of science all taken in biology (typical) would not answer physics, chemistry, and earth science questions as general knowledge questions.

- Only to a limited degree. Many of the items are "raw" recall that have little relation to the contemporary view of scientific literacy.

- My "yes" responses to opportunity to learn mean that coursework exists at institution for such experience. Required programs do not make sure that students would take advantage of opportunity.

Math

- Not necessarily. Many of the questions reflect pre-university learning outcomes that are addressed only after admission to the teacher training program (e.g., math methods). The test appears to aim at logic/concepts/formal thought as opposed to computational skills/traditional math knowledge.

- Not the direct objective of math instruction. The test items are more of general IQ, maturation level and common sense.

- Many of the items are taught in only an indirect or incidental way, especially for those people in secondary education in an area other than science or mathematics.

- Somewhere along the line all high school and college students should be exposed to items of the type used in this test. In fact, the implied objectives are worthwhile goals of instruction. The difficulty is that these goals are seldom emphasized at either the public school or college level.

- For elementary education majors, the questions are fair reflections of content. For secondary (non-math) majors, I can only assume they would come to college with enough math and common sense to answer these.

- No. It appears to be highly specialized to specific areas and not to the overall general content.

- Items appear to be more commonsensical than curriculum oriented; though the material is obtainable via problems and illustrative staff; it is not directly staff of the curriculum.

Social Studies

- Theoretically, after two years at our institution, the skills here tested would be taught. Hence my circling the "yes"s for opportunity. But, in fact, they are not taught to a significant degree, as far as I can tell. Students are told information by and large. The reasoning processes often tested here should be taught. But my guess is that they are not. Telling is easier and most students want it that way.

- Perhaps by chance only, because students have almost an open hand in determining the make up of the general education component of their curriculum. I would predict that a majority of our elementary education students would fail this section even if the passing cut-off was 60%. Thank goodness for students that there are so many map and chart interpretation questions in the group.

- No. Example, no geography is required and social science options may result in other disciplines being excluded. It is difficult for students to have an opportunity to experience modes of inquiry and substantive ideas from disciplines. It is difficult to write questions which are fair to all the social science areas.

- I don't know. I deal only with the curriculum for majors in history.

Literature and Fine Arts

- Yes, as long as we can offer literature and art history courses. I am not sure how the items on this test are related to teaching methods.

The skills it tests well are those of perception of details, relationships between objects and ideas, reasoning, analysis, and interpretation. I think the test adequately deals with all of these. One thing I like about this test is that it's not a test of what a student remembers about a particular poem or painting, but it is rather a test of what the student remembers about how to analyze/interpret a work of art or literature. In that way, it covers content well.

- Yes for literature items and no for fine arts. All students do not take courses where they learn the fine arts information.

- Yes for the literature section but no for the fine arts section. We're also concerned about the total absence of any questions dealing with music; only two have any relationship to the theater.

- Yes, so far as literature goes. We wonder if most students at this level would be well enough acquainted with visual arts to feel comfortable with these questions. They are relatively easy but might well be intimidating to those unfamiliar with the vocabulary of the plastic arts. Since there are no art requirements in the system at lower division levels, this represents a real problem.

- Question on architecture may not reflect our curriculum. I am not certain.

- Pretty much, yes.

2. Are there specific questions which are technically inadequate?

Science

- 8 (answer D does not take into account bio feedback or chemical buffering). 14 (answer C is true for most kids). 15. 30 (this is too vague. Student may very well know that classification follows an outline yet be unable to answer the question because of the obtuse choices).

- Many test items (e.g., 1, 3, 14, 30) appear to have design flaws.

- 4 (question does not specify "short" or "long term" economic view). 14 (correct response is inconsistent with the tentative nature of scientific knowledge). 15 (all possible answers should have some connection to the data, for example, A).

- None.

Math

- 14, 1st sentence implies a "number of peanuts to number of cashews" ratio. Should state, "a nut mixture contains peanuts and cashews in a mass ratio of 4 to 7." 25, very atypical reference to percentage. This probably accounts for the item difficulty reported.

- 25, not clear language. Some teachers may not accept 2 = 200%. 7, directions not clear. 22, calculators allowed?

- No, but some items require very careful reading, e.g., 5, 7, 9, 20.

- 7, the questions "which of the following conclusions necessarily follow from (1), (2), and (3) above". The answer given is B. This would be true if only (1) and (2) but not (3) were listed. Too technical a question. However, items of this type should be included.

- 5, are we focusing on the idea that a x b = c and c is less than a, c less than b? if so, look at your selection! I find no counter examples listed.

- Yes, I think.

- 7 (answer does not nessarily follow from 1, 2, "and 3"; it is the "and 3" that is the issue). 8 (would be answered by computing all the 5 results and choosing the different one). 14 (ratio of 4 to 7 is not clear whether count of nuts or mass of nuts). 20 (not clearly asked for content intended). 25 (percent notation is not a numeral nor a number -- 2 ≠ 200%, % is an operator).

Social Studies

- 3, discrimination between possible answers not clear enough. 7, dated information. 24, put Mississippi River on map. 12, get a better cartoon. Does not clearly match answers. 13, possible answers A, C, and E. Too close to discriminate. 15, answers B and E too close to discriminate. Replace option b. 29, better choices.

- 13, A and B, too far out. I guess this is okay in its requiring some pretty common knowledge (e). 16, is pretty simple (too simple). 26 and 27, too simple. 29, can be tough if a bright student has read anything which deals with the potential problems arising from the trend (reading in Newsweek, Time even).

- 5, for instance, map does not show agricultural areas, population, or climate with which to infer the correct answer. 8, "developing" may be as ethnocentric and objectionable as "uncivilized". 10, "colonialism" rather than "imperialism" would be more common to students. 15, insurance companies make this a difficult question.

- 22 and 23 are vague.

- No.

Literature and Fine Arts

- 6, the picture does not convey the details well enough; the circular windows are hard to see (I used a photocopy of the test, perhaps a better picture would show more detail). 25, the curved lines of E are not evident in the picture (again, a photocopy).

- None (N=2).

- 28, there is a "best" answer but there is a better one (i.e., the merging of the figures by means of chiaroscuro). 29, I feel that this one, particularly in the collision of "western" ways of seeing (i.e., the movie projector image) and Oriental values, suggests answers again not stated.

- 6, sticky diction. In some cases I am uncertain whether the test measures item-centered achievement (34) or critical thinking as a process (26). It seems some consistency is needed. 22, for example, is a content question. 21 is a comprehension question. Are we testing both?

- 7, difficult to narrow down -- B and E are both possible though B is probably the best answer, E being only somewhat accurate. 10, again D is probably sought but A is possible. 15, poor picture makes 2 or 3 answers possible. 33, sharper pictures might help -- B and D possible but fuzzed picture doesn't automatically make B the clear choice if that's what is sought.

3. Does the difficulty level appear to be appropriate for your students?

Science

- Difficulty basically okay, but the content is badly out of alignment with contemporary views of the knowledge, skills, and values of a scientifically literate person.

- Yes

- It is not appropriate. There is too much of the test that is not based on general knowledge but on general knowledge in specific disciplines of science. Those who have had coursework in those disciplines will do well. Those who have had only biology will do poorly in physics and earth science, maybe chemistry as well.

Math

- Generally appropriate.

- I would expect uniformly high percentile rates on section 2. Many items were very low percentile. Some items too easy, other items too difficult.

- Yes, but possibly the test is a bit long for the time allowed.

- I believe my secondary math education students would have difficulty with the critical thinking, load of the reading but not of the mathematics concepts involved. I would like for the test to be more comprehensive, including more geometry and some probability. The test if used would be more appropriate as an entrance rather than an exit

test. The concepts the items test are relevant. However, the critical thinking skills in reading necessary to answer the question is a heavy load for most anyone, especially within the time limit of 30 minutes.

- Yes, they should do reasonably well. I can see where they still might grasp the concept but get tricked up on the answers, but those cases are few.

- The questions are appropriate.

- Not for my students.

Social Studies

- It is reasonably appropriate for all students, education, liberal arts, engineers, etc., particularly the emphasis on skills expected of a literate public which participates in its own governance.

- If most of our elementary education students take only 15-20 credits (3 or 4 classes) in general education -- social sciences -- and only at the freshman/sophomore level, then most likely the students will have difficulty with this test. A structured, rigid general education curriculum for elementary education would probably help students pass this test.

- One might just as well use the SAT. Most of the questions deal with basic analysis, rather than any specific knowledge or insights that would be acquired through one's courses as a college student.

- I would suggest more emphasis upon questions calling for higher level significant operations: synthesis and analysis.

Literature and Fine Arts

- Yes. The better language arts majors should score fairly high on this test. I doubt that I would want the test geared to the average or below average language arts student.

- Yes. Although difficult for students, the literature questions seem appropriate.

- Difficulty level is approximately right. Even students without academic (i.e., course work) should be able to do fairly well on this.

- Yes, even for the visual arts. That is, it all seems relatively sophisticated but it is material they should know. Certainly, it is material that I would hope any teacher would feel comfortable with.

- It seems too difficult. It also seems loaded on the side of art history and architecture.

- Yes, it would appear appropriate for seniors in college.

4. Minority or sex bias noted?

Science

- No (N=3).

Math

- Slight female bias (e.g., questions 9 and 17).
- None noted (N=4).
- No sex bias. I am not qualified to comment on minority bias.

Social Studies

- No. The bias is a curriculum bias. One course in each of the following areas: general social science methodology, cultural geography, sociology, economics, and U.S. history.
- None that I could determine (N=3).

Literature and Fine Arts

- None that I noted (N=3).
- Seems to make a concerted effort to include minority and feminist items.
- Didn't detect any blatant bias; an effort was made to balance. However, other biases could be identified; e.g., rural students would have a disadvantage, especially in the art and architecture questions.
- It seems to me "sneakily" biased. That is, it includes "feminist" and "minority" oriented material but it assumes a level of cultural knowledge that is particularly "high brow" and could be considered biased from a minority point of view.

5. Would you like to use this test with OSSHE students prior to recommendation for certification?

Science

- No. The content tested is not relevant.
- No. Would desire more thorough testing based on biological, physical concepts plus reasoning ability.
- No. No elementary education major would pass it at the 70th percentile. Unless OSSHE is willing to demand of all education majors

a well distributed background in all the sciences you are simply going to have to use high school level test items and norms. I believe you should require 30 hours of science of all education majors, 9-10 hours in biology, 9-10 hours in earth science, 9-10 hours in physical science (physics and chemistry, not to include earth science). With such a distribution you might then expect students to pass the test. A compromise on the above would be wise advising that pre-ed students with no high school physics, chemistry, or earth science take these courses in college. Advisors should forbid taking more work in biology unless the student simply wishes to do so as elective hours.

Math

- I would see it more appropriately used for admission to the teacher education program.

- No, the CBEST test seems to be a better instrument. Some items may be more a test of reading ability or carefulness in reading than a test of mathematical knowledge, e.g., items 5, 9, 20.

- No, if I were to give the test it should be an entry test. The question I have -- would this be the best entry test available? Maybe CBEST would be a better choice. Before an exit test is required I would hope some rationale would be provided for such a move. The rationale should be something more than appeasing the legislature and the public in general.

- Either this or CBEST but not both. They are roughly equivalent. The focus is appropriately placed on understanding of math and meaningful application, for this I applaud it.

- No. I don't think this test is appropriate. Too many basic concepts are missing. This is certainly a very poor sample of the content a teacher should know if the sample reflects the total curriculum. Why were so many basic concepts not included when several foreign areas were included? If only 25 questions are to be used they should at least cover the basics.

- No. Many basic areas were left out.

- No! I would prefer a local test in math developed by local talent and related to common core curriculum reflected in Oregon Math Guide. An exit test in math that combines math and math education (pedagogy) in current practice would be very helpful in smoothing out the wide differences in the math education programs from institution to institution, both public and private in Oregon.

- Not necessarily. Only for information purposes, not for screening. I don't see the relevance of ability to perform well on this and "goodness" of teacher. Could be used as a general test for B.S. degree in all disciplines. Not much thrust is on curricular material per se; rather some kind of general I.Q. or General Ability Test. Good material to have known but little to do with teaching screen.

Social Studies

- No, because most questions test knowledge anyone should have. Yes, if we use test for anyone getting a degree in the field, not just for teachers. What does BA/BS degree mean? I like the skill emphasis. Better questions could make it a quality test.

- No. I basically disagree with general knowledge tests for recommendation for certification. I suppose this test is as noxious or innocuous as any. From the 30 questions obviously the most important elements must be chart and graph interpretation, 25% of the questions are . . .

- Yes. Need to identify substantive understanding of key generalizations from disciplines.

- No. My responses to the questions reflect my belief that any student qualified to attend a college or university should be able to select the correct answers, whether or not said student had completed a curriculum designed to match this test. The exam simply measures common sense and very basic intelligence.

- By itself, this is insufficient if Oregon goes the testing route. It requires an exercise of skills and abilities which teachers should be able to accomplish. I am surprised at the quality (good) of mental processes it requires. Many students to whom I've talked who claim to have taken this (maybe) or similar tests have denigrated them as too easy or not relevant or practical. One may indeed find certain of these questions obscure or poor technically or otherwise (quality of substantive information required). But they are better than their complaints would indicate. By and large, they require reasoning ability which they frequently lack, or which if they have it, they do not customarily exercise. There is more substantive knowledge required here than I may have suggested. That's good. Questions liked by me: 3, 8, 7, 10, 11, 17, 21, 22. 4 and 5 are interesting items. 4 simply requires sensible observations of map; 5 requires correct choices in 4 and geographical and economics knowledge. 9 and 10 both easy, any misses on these two should alert schools of education that the test takers are of limited capacity or at a level at which they need careful teaching, drilling, and very hard sustained work. 15 requires more of a student and has more value than at first glance.

  I don't find the prospect of testing of prospective teachers as demeaning a proposal as I formerly believed. This stems primarily from the undeniable point that they generally are not attuned to being rigorous about learning and about"basics." That other university students are not rigorous or are more rigorous is irrelevant. They (prospective teachers) are frequently delightful, kind hearted, interested in "people," embued with a sense of service, keenly desirous of helping children develop to their fullest potentials. But these gentle and fuzzily articulated aims seem to nudge aside the gritty problem of teaching specific skills and knowledge accurately, precisely, unswervingly as well as lovingly. They seem to feel " it will come with practice." I have tried to instill a key point with

students: "you are not practicing anymore when you get in front of a class as the instructor. You know basic information as well as you know your own face, or you don't belong there. And your reasoning processes and ability to articulate them should be a great deal better than those of the "average" man or woman." Of course, this is only part of the problem. Teaching is still an art and there aren't that many artists around.

Literature and Fine Arts

- Yes, because it tests the students' ability to interpret the arts.
- Although I would not suggest requiring any test of professional methods or subject matter, if one must be given this one is as good as any. Assures students have a knowledge of specific vocabulary related to literature and fine arts.
- I feel uneasy recommending the use of this test because I'm not convinced that it proves anything particularly. If Oregon were to consider yet another test for teacher education, we should carefully consider other tests. Literature questions need to be expanded to include non-western examples. This is truly biased.
- This test leaves me unconvinced that testing of this kind is either useful or necessary. If we have to have a test, I'd like to see others. This might be the best but I hope not. It seems that there is a real emphasis on vocabulary here, far greater than the introductory comments indicate -- art vocabulary and general vocabulary. For instance, my guess is that 61% missed 27 because they did not know what "transitory" meant. A student not knowing the word "facade" would have difficulty with many of the art questions (and believe me, as someone who teachers an Introduction to the Visual Arts, the word "facade" is not widely used by the undergraduate population).
- No, I'd like to see separate sections on achievement and critical thinking.
- Fine Arts should include questions on music and theater in more abundance, I suppose.
- No, I would prefer the CBEST as it more particularly addresses analytical skills. This one relies fairly heavily on familiarity, derived from course work and therefore, is not as sharply focused on analysis and reasoning as I would like to see.

Communications

1. Does the test reflect the curriculum of students who would be taking it?

Listening

- This is not a curriculum test.

- Not at all. It is unreasonable to ask anyone to listen to a conversation and not be able to ask questions.

- No. Students are not taught to respond to oral listening situations by reading multiple choice responses and identifying the correct response. The strategy of listening to a selection and then switching modes to reading multiple choice responses calls for a "communications skill" we do not teach.

- No. There are serious problems here with directions (how to listen and respond), shift of modes between reading and listening (this section of the test measures reading skills at least as much as listening), general unfamiliarity with this kind of testing mode. This is a very poor measure of the listening skills necessary to be successful in a teacher education program and in teaching. And an appalling beginning to the communications test . . . should start with reading.

- Is this test measuring listening? Appears to involve reading, thinking, test taking strategies, ability to understand dialect differences.

- Not taught to overhear conversations and make judgements. Not taught how to do two or more things at once, i.e., listen and read questions and think logically!

- Don't think part B is necessary though questions 30-31 may be helpful as they address paralanguage meaning from vocal tone.

- Yes. It covers general knowledge areas that should be familiar to students.

- There is no attempt to teach the kinds of skills tested here. Further, the mode of the test is inappropriate. A mixture of oral and reading skills right at the first of the test is very bad. The distractors are often poor. Obvious attempts to reduce culture bias are embarrassing, many not valid.

Reading

- Yes, in that they should have the skills needed to successfully complete the test. Test items are reflective of activities completed through their education.

- The content of the questions could be found in any curricular area in the freshman and sophomore year.

- Reflects reading skills students should have at this level.

- No. A test of basic reading skills, totally dependent on passages.

- Only in that the same type of thinking is required in our textbooks and exams. None of this is curriculum unless it happens to use a relevant result from research conclusions.

Writing

- I would hope they have these proficiencies.
- Yes, it does.
- It reflects an isolated but important series of skills that should have been learned by most students in junior high, high school, and college writing courses. The college does not have separate courses in grammar and usage.
- If the students were elementary or secondary language arts majors, yes. But any other major, no. Elementary and secondary language arts majors have the background.
- There seems to be a balance between the skills needed in item 2, but nothing about organization, rhetorical modes of discourse, etc.

2. Are there questions which are technically inadequate?

Listening

- The directions are very inadequate,
- No. Vocabulary is the real measure, not specifically listening skills
- 32-40. Raters disagreed on where skill was taught. I think so, because this is the way college courses are taught (lecture,exam and because study skills course in student services covers note taking. Co-rater says we don't teach listening to lectures per se. In speech 121 I think we cover grasping central ideas.
- Didn't note technical inadequacies.
- Several are ambiguous. Most are about trivial matters.

Reading

- 17-22 seem particularly hard, might be good discriminators, but.
- 8, 10, 20 -- passage independent. 26, insufficient evidence to draw this conclusion.
- 7, 12, 21 (for latter, no choices are appropriate).
- 13, 19, 21, 22 — confusing statements.
- Questions such as 1, 13, 22, and 25 require the kind of mental processing in which test takers come to the right conclusion and still choose the wrong answer. They are linguistically a convoluted and unnecessary process due to the format.

Writing

- After some heartening talk about writing for a specific audience, the sample essay question assumes (without saying so in the actual directions) "an audience of well-educated members of the educational community." Is this an appropriate audience for students entering teacher education programs? And do most of the essay topics finally evade the question of plausible real audiences?

- I did not notice any (N=2).

- The first 25 questions seem primarily limited to comprehension skills versus writing. The last 20 questions seemed limited to vocabulary knowledge. Both important to writing but . . . are subsets of writing, and in matters of style, can be circumvented.

3. Does the difficulty level appear appropriate for your students?

Listening

- The strategy of testing is not appropriate to prior instruction. We could train students to do this test but why — if the only reason is to pass the test. This is not a life skill or academic skills for that process.

- Some students will have trouble with this test because success may depend on the quality of the device used to play the record/tape, ability to hear, etc. I think if the test is administered properly, students could do this.

- Difficulty is not the issue. The listening test appears to be an exercise in and of itself. It does not measure listening per se.

- The test was not overly difficult if students listen carefully.

- No. "living" prepares me for answering part A (responding appropriately). Beyond this, I had trouble with part A. I'm not multi-channelled. Reading while listening is difficult. Being under a time gun to read makes the material too difficult. Having to mark a computer form and keep all the numbers clear -- going from a test booklet to answer sheet takes time. I needed more time for part A. Add to this the necessity to think logically and I think part A is too hard.

Reading

- Seems a very redundant measure of skills assessed by SAT or ACT Verbal and the CBEST or CAT Reading assessments. How many times must students pay ETS to show they are proficient readers?

- Yes, would anticipate minimal problems.

- Yes.
- This is not an unreasonable test but is duplicated by the CBEST. Students shouldn't be required to take both.
- Yes, I don't think they would have a great deal of problems after taking several college classes.
- Level of reading comprehension required was about right.

Writing

- Generally yes.
- Yes. I feel students should be able to handle this material.
- Appears very detailed. With the emphasis on clear, concise writing, some items appear more conducive for the likes of Safire and Espy than our literate pre-service population.
- For English majors, it would be appropriate.
- Ok. I think most English majors would perform adequately.
- Appropriate to an English major with experience in grammar and comprehension teaching methods.

4. Minority or sex bias noted?

Listening

- No (N=3).
- Without a balance of varied dialects, it seems biased toward all non-standard English speakers.
- The presence of a Hispanic speaker as a blatantly token minority was offensive in the listening section. The usual objections about standard written English for non-native or bilingual students also apply to this test.
- One speaker had a definite Latino accent; hard to understand for some; seems to penalize both whites and Latinos.
- Dialectic differences set up bias for each group taking the test. Clear directions, speaking, recording are imperative. This recording is very difficult to follow.
- Yes. Chicano accent.
- The Hispanic speaker might be difficult for some to understand. She appears only 1/5 of the time anyway. Would this help? There is no speaker of Black English Vernacular.

Reading

- No more than general standardized test data.
- Reading material is factually oriented. They are not representative of different genres — poetry, literature, non-fiction, fiction.
- There might be an unreasonable balance in terms of background knowledge in favor of white, middle class.
- Not noted. Good job using plurals to avoid he/she.

Writing

- Not that I noted (N=4).

5. Would you like to use this test with OSSHE students prior to recommendations for certification?

Listening

- Part one would be realistic. The other two parts, really unrealistic in a classroom or in life.
- No. Due to lack of reason for assessing listening in this way. It does not assess either what is taught or a life skill.
- Beginning a test like this, with all its attendant test anxiety, with a testing mode as unfamiliar as the present listening section is a very poor choice. Rather than building some confidence and relieving some anxiety, this section might disorient and depress students who may very well be very good listeners in other contexts. Overall, I would strongly recommend not using the listening section of the NTE.
- No! Too dependent on examiner and quality of equipment for playing record/tape. Some voices difficult to understand (accent). Would be difficult for foreign students and ESL students. I do not feel that this is a reliable measure of listening. This style of presentation and responding is not frequently taught. I think students can respond to this type of test, if the presentation of the recording is done well but it seems to take several questions before one develops a system of responding. Anxiety would reduce ability to answer questions.
- No. As a "test" of basic skills, not adequate. Basic skills are already tested. The reliability of this measure must depend on the quality of the sound; testing sites would have difficult equipment.
- Yes. I'd like to see how they'd fare. I don't think it should be a requirement as I do not think the test measures just listening.
- Yes. Listening skills are most important for teachers but are not always tested.

- Test format poor quality. Not really a test of listening skills. Distractors are unrealistic to the type and quality of the questions. Directions on listening test "when you hear the question" directs a mode to which students cannot respond as a listening skill but as a listening/reading skill.

- It does not seem necessary to m e to supplement the CBEST and other measures in use. When we should already have tests in reading, editing, and writing, we have no need for additional testing. The "listening" test is troublesome.

Reading

- The reading section, so typical of all standardized tests from SAT to the GRE, seems optional to me. I wonder, though, how much more discrimination of ability and achievement we gain by such repetition.

- No, not if CBEST continues to be used in its current design. The reading assessments are similar in nature and intent and represent a duplication of basic skill measure.

- The reading section is similar to the CBEST except that reading passages are more education-oriented than the CBEST.

- No, not representative enough of reading. How is this different from the CBEST reading test? As an evaluator, would have like to see an item analysis to understand what proficiencies these questions were to reflect.

- Either the CBEST or this if there must be a basic skills test but not both. The timing makes this test a test of speed rather than power. Discriminates against slow readers, against monitoring comprehension.

- Yes, these particular skills are typical of those we would expect graduating secondary students to possess.

- Not if the "this only, that only, this and that only, that and this only" items are retained. The reading comprehension/logic requires a good variety of inferencing and paraphrasing skills and the topics of the items were fair and seemed unbiased.

Writing

- The writing portion of this test is definitely preferable to the current CBEST editions.

- I would suggest this being used in conjunction with a written essay. I really question whether this test meets a writing competency. Students should be required to produce a writing sample to meet the requirement. Knowledge of grammar does not transfer automatically to cohesive, coherent writing.

- The writing section seems state-of-the-art though the art is far from the most desirable one for direct measures of writing ability.

- Even though the essay portion of the writing section adds a relatively small measure of validity and reliability to the information derived from the objective portion of the writing test, I strongly urge that the essay portion be refined as a model (and message) for students that writing experience remains a necessary preparation for this test. Otherwise, I fear that students will want to prepare by taking grammar and error-avoidance tests rather than learning an important, genuine form of human communication.

- If this portion is used it should only be used in conjunction with the essay and only if CBEST is eliminated. There is no need to test students on basic skills twice.

- It would be appropriate for English majors. Therefore, for most students, I would much prefer a heavier emphasis on performance (writing sample) such as the CBEST calls for. The first 25 might be difficult for non-English majors, who may very well not make the error they are unable to detect in these samples of writing.

- Possibly. Perhaps as a non-binding status report, so that prospective English teachers could see their abilities in proofreading grammatical items. A writing sample would be a very useful addition to the test.

- No, because it doesn't seem to be comprehensive as to all of the skills in writing. I wouldn't feel comfortable using this test to evaluate the writing skills of my students. Any student at my institution would have an opportunity to be exposed to all of the problems outlined in all the questions. Whether they acquired the knowledge is another matter. I feel that all teachers should be aware of all problems in writing.